b"H

Course: **ENG 1121**

Sections: **D439, E106, E115**

Spring 2019: **February**

Professor: **Schmerler**

**UNIT 1 ESSAY ASSIGNMENT**

**INSTRUCTIONS 1-4 and DUE DATES, BELOW:**

1: **Read** the excerpt from Malcolm X's biography, located on our READINGS page under "Umbrella Readings." You can also download it here: [LINK](https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/schmerlereng1121e106spring2019/files/2019/02/Malcolm-X-Learning-to-Read.pdf)

2: **Read** and **consider** my observations and questions to you, below:

Freedom can be found in unexpected places. Freedom can be acquired in unexpected ways. Freedom came to Malcolm X in prison -- literally, while he was locked up behind iron bars -- in the form of reading, and *understanding,* books. He copied words and punctuation he did not know; he re-read them aloud to himself. He figured out how to teach himself new words and how they functioned. As a result, books became vehicles -- almost like cars or airplanes -- transporting him out of his own confinement. His life was never the same after that.

Here is one question that I, your professor, ask you before you start writing:

Is confinement, ultimately, more mental/spiritual than physical?

Here are a few more questions I want to ask you before you begin writing. We may explore these together next class, but I want you to consider them now:

Have you ever had to teach yourself how to do something? How did you accomplish is it all by yourself?

Have you ever found something very difficult that other people found easy?

If so, did you ever *challenge* *yourself* to try? How did that go?

3. **Write** an essay -- yes, a standard, "English Class," essay. (No more prisoner's constraints. You may use the entire alphabet.) Due Dates: (see the bottom of this sheet for your Section # due date). Write, knowing that **you will be graded (A–F)** on writing strong paragraphs, proper grammar usage and punctuation, effective and creative content, and cleanly formatted typing. (Yes, you will be marked off for things like lazy spelling and punctuation errors, sentences that have no beginning or end, typing that is messy and hard to read, and the improper capitalization of the first person pronoun -- stuff like that.)

**Your topic:** Finding Freedom.

**Your source:** Yourself and your own experiences and beliefs *in as much detail as you can and want to give*, and *you may also reference* Malcolm X's article, if you wish, for support or inspiration or contrast.

**Your word *limit*:** 850 words (that comes out to about 4 pages, typed)

**Your format:** double-spaced, typed, in 12-point font

**Required at the top left margin of your paper**, and all your papers going forward, is the following information:

Your **NAME**

Your COURSE AND **SECTION #**

Your PROFESSOR'S **NAME**

The **Date**

[And, centered in the middle of the page:]

THE **TITLE** OF YOUR ESSAY

[Make it a good and interesting title, please. Nothing boring like, "My Freedom Essay." Thanks. : - )]

4. Final Note: I hope the above is clear. That said, it might not be, to you. Please know that essay writing is *always* a *challenge*. When you write, no one is physically present to talk back to you. You always need to check in with yourself and ask: why do I care about this topic? How can I convince you (the reader) of my opinions and ideas? If you want more commentary and support on rhetorical writing, please see the essays by Carroll and Graff, which you were assigned to read for UNIT 1.

**DUE DATES**

**Section D439 (Mon/Wed):** Upload your essay our OpenLab Site no later than **Wed. 27** using the Category: ASSIGNMENT 2 -- ESSAY.

+ make 1 hard copy to bring to class on **Mar. 4**.

**Section E106 (Mon eve):** Upload your essay our OpenLab Site no later than **Thu. 28** using the Category: ASSIGNMENT 2 -- ESSAY.

+ make 1 hard copy to bring to class on **Mar. 4**.

**Section E115 (Tues eve):** Upload your essay our OpenLab Site no later than **Mar 1** using the Category: ASSIGNMENT 2 -- ESSAY.

+ make 1 hard copy to bring to class on **Mar. 5**.